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ABSTRACT

This paper in the form of an outline addresses the use of songs and instrumental music throughout the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) curriculum. The rationale for using music in general, and specifically using popular songs and instrumental music, are noted. Criteria for selection of music for classroom use are listed, and a taxonomy is offered of classroom techniques for using music. Activities are classified by the skill or skills they address: listening comprehension; reading comprehension; pronunciation/speaking practice; writing practice; culture-based activities; and grammar. Uses of instrumental music and music as a content area are addressed separately. Samples of appropriate music are offered (texts appended). An annotated bibliography lists articles about music in the class, commercial instructional materials using music, and some additional songs suitable for classroom use. (MSE)

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For a Song: Music Across the ESL Curriculum

Kristin Lems, National-Louis University

TESOL '96

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Outline of Presentation

I. Theoretical foundations and rationale for music use
   A. Benefits intrinsic to using any music
      1. High interest - high motivation - memorable
      2. Lowered inhibition level
      3. Reaches learners with right brain strengths
      4. Reaches learners with auditory strengths
      5. Helps promote class bonding
      6. Helps create shared frame of cultural reference
   B. Benefits specific to pre-recorded popular music
      1. Use of authentic, effective speech
      2. Songs have enough redundancy to catch meaning on first pass
      3. Ability to replay (CD/cassette) and pause (cassette only) at will
      4. Illustration of high frequency vocabulary and idioms
      5. Illustration of syntax patterns
      6. Illustration of grammar in context
      7. High-interest topics and themes
      8. Prestige value of knowing songs from Target Culture
      9. Rhythmic element helps reinforce English prosody and fluency
   C. Benefits of playing selected instrumental music
      1. Playing Classical/Baroque music improves test scores
      2. Can assist in relaxation
      3. Claims are made that accelerated learning is possible

II. Some Criteria for choosing songs for classroom use
   A. Most importantly: you like the song and want to share it!
   B. Words easily intelligible
   C. Enough repetition to provide oral practice
   D. Song is popular, or a "classic" likely to be heard by Ss outside class
   E. Well-written from a native speaker perspective
   F. If students will sing it, range of notes suitable for average mixed voices
   G. Contains values and themes you want to introduce into the class
   H. When possible, nice illustration of target grammar item(s)
   I. If part of a unit of songs, good to draw upon different musical genres
   K. Additional considerations based on level:
      1. low level - should have limited base vocabulary, no more than 16 lines of text, lots of repetition
      2. intermediate level - manageable load of vocabulary, limited total text length, not heavily embedded

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L. Things to avoid in potential song selections:
    1. Overwhelming length
    2. Complicated or contradictory imagery
    3. Unnatural stress, poor grammar, distorted pronunciation
    4. Tongue-twisting wordiness
    5. Abstruse references

III. Incomplete Taxonomy of ways to use music in the ESL classroom (classified by featured component; most activities combine several components)
  A. For listening comprehension - with CD/tape or video
    1. Identify fast speech reductions through cloze
      a. Fill in **before** listening to cultivate guided listening and hypothesis formation
      b. Fill in during listening
    2. Scramble lines of lyrics on large index cards - can be ordered as Ss listen
    3. Mark stress patterns ("beats") on lyric sheet while listening
    4. Transcribe entire song while listening, dictation style (or assign small groups one verse each), then check w/ master copy of lyrics
    5. Play song while displaying accompanying pictures as aids to meaning
  B. For reading comprehension
    1. Preteach target vocabulary and idioms, then illustrate in context
    2. Study as literature, examining prosodic and thematic features
    3. Compare and contrast w/ a related reading
  C. For pronunciation/speaking practice
    1. Speak/chant/whisper lyrics as a group along with tape with lyrics supplied, pausing tape during practice, then at full tempo
    2. Same as point 1, but singing along with tape
    3. Sing along with music track only - "karaoke" style (some lang. labs can even record a student track on top of an instrumental track. Ss could purchase their own blank karaoke tapes)
    4. Sing/chant song in alternating assigned solo parts
    5. Memorize and perform song(s) for class, especially for last day
    6. Discuss topic or content of song in large or small groups
    7. Have songs sung as part of daily routine
    8. Role play the lyrics of pop songs in front of the class
  D. For writing practice
    1. Add additional verse to song in small groups (can use recorded instrumental break to fit in extra verse)
    2. Write verses to "zipper" songs or blues songs
    3. Write parody or new set of words to known melody
    4. Make written response/reaction to the song topic; examples:
      a. Does this song remind you of anything in your own life?

b. What do you think happened next, after the story in the song? (Ode to Billie Jo, etc.)
c. Do you agree with the point of view of the singer? Why or why not?
d. Write down what happens in the song, in your own words.
e. Think about the relationship between the two people in the song. Write it as a dialog.

5. Have Ss prepare 5 minute written reports about their own favorite song, then play the song for the class
6. Compare and contrast two songs
7. Give writing assignment based on listening to classical piece and writing a story response, then sharing it with class as music plays

E. For culture-based activities
1. Use with accompanying readings to teach Americana - regions, values, history
2. Use as part of unit on teaching tolerance, or as intro to minority cultures
3. Use as lead-in activity for a cross-class session w/ a class of nearby native speakers
4. Teach standard American "patriotic" songs to prepare for citizenship
5. Perform songs studied as part of multicultural night at school

F. For grammar
1. Lift out and analyze model grammar patterns to supplement grammar book
2. Generate Ss sentences from model sentences in song
3. Analyze grammar features for their relation to meaning (why is she using past tense here? etc.)

G. Some uses of instrumental music
1. Play classical music before or -if agreed upon- during tests
2. Play music in background before class or during break to set an atmosphere, or as a warmup to a related theme
3. Use to dance or move to, as a wake-up activity and change of pace
4. Bring tapedeck, etc. with cassettes, CD, or radio for last day parties

H. Music as content area
1. Teach a unit on musicology or music appreciation
2. Use materials about American pop stars
3. Have students prepare presentations sharing their knowledge of music, or introducing their culture to the class through music
4. Focus on the oeuvre of a single musician (Elvis, etc.)

IV. Sample Illustrations

A. Background music playing as you entered!
B. For wake-up activity/change of pace, and oral practice - My Name is Joe
C. For pronunciation/speaking practice - Move on Bravely Ahead
D. For reading comprehension/cultural studies - Gangsta's Paradise
D. For writing - writing Sharing extra verse, In my Family's House
all songs attached at end of handout

V. Annotated Bibliography

A. Articles about music in the classroom
B. Commercial materials using music
C. List of some songs suitable for classroom use
attached to handout

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Gangsta's Paradise
by Coolio

Verse 1
As I walk through the valley of the shadow of death
I take a look at my life and realize there's [not] much left
Cause I been blastin' and laughin' so long
That even my Mama thinks that my mind is gone

Verse 2
But I ain't never crossed a man that didn't deserve it
Me be treated like a punk? You know that's unheard of
You['d] better watch out your talkin' and where you walkin'
Or you and your homeys might be lyin'in chalk

Verse 3
I really hate to trip but I gotta lope
As they grope I see myself in the pistol smoke - fool!
I'm the kind of gig'lo that the homeys want to be like
On my knees in the light sayin' prayers in the streetlight

chorus
Been spendin' most [of] their lives
Livin' in a gangsta's paradise
Keep spendin' most [of] our lives
Livin' in a gangsta's paradise

Verse 4
They got the situation they got me facin'
I can't live with no more I was raised by the streets
So I gotta be down with the Hood team
Too much cowboy vigilante got me chasin' dreams

Verse 5
I'm an educated fool with my knee on the mark
Got my tin in my hand and a gleam in my eye
I'm a lowdown gangsta set trippin' banker
And my homeys is down, so don't arouse my anger - fool!

Verse 6
Death ain't nothin' but a heartbeat away
I'm livin' life though I'm dyin' - what can I say?
I'm 23 now but will I live to see 24?
The way that things is goin' I don't know.

second chorus
Tell me, why are we so blind to see
That the ones we hurt are you and me?

chorus
Been spendin' most their lives
Livin' in a gangsta's paradise
Keep spendin' most our lives
Livin' in a gangsta's paradise

Verse 7
Power and the money, money and the power
Minute after minute, hour after hour
Everybody' runnin' but half of them ain't lookin'
[What's] goin' on in the kitchen, but I don't know what's cookin'

Verse 8
They say I got to learn, but nobody's there to teach me
If they can't understand how can they reach me?
I guess they can't, I guess they won't, I guess they're frucked
That's why I know my life is out of luck - fool!

Vocabulary:

Most of this vocabulary is African-American street slang

Verse 1:
1 - the whole line is a direct quote from the 23rd Psalm of the Bible, starting "The Lord is my Shepherd...."
3 - blastin' - shooting guns, fighting
4 - my mind is gone - I'm crazy

Verse 2:
1 - crossed a man - fought with a man
2 - treated like a punk - treated without respect
4 - homeys - group of friends from the same neighborhood
lyin' in chalk - dead (the police draw a chalk line around a dead body on the street)

Verse 3:
1 - trip - brag, talk too much
lope - go, walk away
2 - grope - struggle
fool! - an insult said to others or to oneself

3 - gig'lo - man who has many women doing things for him, sexually powerful

chorus:
gangsta - gangster, criminal
gangsta's paradise - a great place for criminals (but nobody else)

Verse 4
3 - be down with the Hood team - get along with the neighborhood gang
4 - cowboy vigilante - people who act like they're in the Wild West

Verse 5
1 - knee on the mark - ready to run, like a runner ready to begin a race
2 - tin in my hand - beggars hold a cup for panhandling
3 - lowdown - total
4 - my homeys is down - my friends/fellow gang members are in trouble

Verse 7
3 - [What's] goin' on in the kitchen - what's happening around you
4 - what's cookin'- what's really happening

Verse 8
3 - frucked - substitution for a swear word, meaning no good, or doomed
4 - out of luck - unlucky, hopeless

General Questions:

1. How would you describe the speaker's emotions?

2. Do you see any expressions of hope in the song?

3. If he is living in a "gangsta's paradise," what kind of world is it? Describe it.

Activity:

Coolio has three different "tones" or attitudes in this song:
1. bragging and threatening
2. describing terrible conditions
3. sincere desire for a better life

Using a pencil or colored highlight pens, mark the text line by line showing which of the three tones he is using in each line. Compare your choices with your classmates. Which tone does he use the most? Which one do you think is most important?

Now, listen to the song again, and sing on the chorus.
by Kristin Lems c 1996

Sharing

words and music by Kristin Lems
from the tape **Sharing**

chorus:

Sharing, sharing isn't it fun?
To benefit two people, not only one
To benefit three people, four people, more
If we can't live by sharing, then what is life for?

Your ball and my ball are no longer known
Your roses, my roses got intergrown
Yours and mine ours became, long may it be
May what I have serve you, and you have serve me

chorus

Once we were covetous of others' things
Of your clothes, of my nose, your ribbons, my rings
But now that we're wiser and learned how to share
For all of life's needs, there is plenty to spare

chorus

We can share languages, we can share food
We can share in a feeling or share in a mood
And we can share secrets, it wouldn't be wrong
Or share in a harmony, singing this song

your verse:

We can share _____, we can share _____(a)_____

_____(rhyme of a)____

And we can share _____(b)_____

_____(rhyme of b)____

The **Sharing** tape can be ordered from:
Carolsdatter Productions
221 - C Dodge Ave.
Evanston, IL 60202 price: tape - $10, book (lyrics and pictures) - $4

Move on Bravely Ahead
by Kristin Lems

1. Are you fed up? Are you beat down?
Move on bravely ahead.
Feel like no one wants you around?
Move on bravely ahead.
No one ever told you that you'd have no strife
Or hunger, or loneliness that cuts like a knife
But you gotta make good, it's a contract for life
So move on bravely ahead, yes, you got to move on bravely ahead.

2. Lost your true love? lost your best friend? you got to
Move on bravely ahead.
Wonder if the hard times will ever end? you got to
Move on bravely ahead
Nothing comes with any guarantee
But you have got your life and your liberty
And the pursuit of happiness is yours to see
If you move on bravely ahead, yes, you got to
Move on bravely ahead.

3. Addicted? convicted? and left behind?
You gotta move on bravely ahead?
Groping? hardly coping with humankind?
You gotta move on bravely ahead.
Keep on inchin' that train uphill
To make it up the mountain is a question of will
You gotta be upbeat and never stand still
And move on bravely ahead, yes you got to
Move on bravely ahead.

4. Afraid to act? don't know what's next? still
Move on bravely ahead.
Far more problems than you'd ever expect? you got to
Move on bravely ahead.
You got one thing that can help you a lot
It's your own sweet life, it's happenin' - it's hot
It's very special, so give it all you got
And move on bravely ahead, yes, you got to
Move on bravely ahead...
Move on bravely ahead.

from the CD **Upbeat!** by Kristin Lems. $16.50 (includes postage) to: Carolsdatter Productions, 221 - C Dodge Ave., Evanston, IL 60202. Karaoke version of this song available on cassette tape for an extra $5. Receipt furnished with all orders.

Additional Songs Demonstrated

My Name is Joe
author unknown

Hi! My name is Joe
and I work in a button factory
I've got a wife and a dog and a family
Well one day, the boss comes up to me and says
"Hi Joe! Are you busy?"
I says "No."
"OK, turn the button with your [right hand]."
next verse:
left hand
right foot
left foot
head

last verse:
"Hi Joe! Are you busy?"
I says "YES!"

In My Family's House
traditional - originally a Carter family gospel song "In My Father's House" (changed by Linda Alvarez), recorded on the tape **In My Family's House** by Bruce O'Brien Song Circle Records, 604 Newton St., Eau Claire, WI 54701

There'll be joy, joy
In my family's house (3x)

There'll be joy
In my family's house
And there'll be peace sweet peace.

There'll be lots of [love]
In my family's house....etc.

There'll be lots of music
friends
books

etc.
End with "joy" verse.

Select Annotatated Bibliography
Articles related to Using Music in the ESL Classroom

Cranmer, David and Laroy Clement. (1993) **Musical Openings: Using Music in the Language Classroom**. Addison-Wesley/Longman. Book and tape focusing on instrumental music.

Domoney, Liz, and Harris, Simpson. (1993) "Justified and Ancient: Pop Music in EFL Classrooms." **ELT Journal**. Vol. 47 n3, July 1993, pp. 234-41. A unit for a Mexican secondary school teacher training program incorporating music as a central element of the ESL program.

Eken, Deniz Kurtoglu. (1996) "Ideas for Using Songs in the English Language Classroom." **English Teaching Forum**. Vol. 34 n1, Jan. 1996, pp. 46-7. Author profiles three creative lessons, one with Vivaldi and free drawing, one with a Rod Stewart song and a set of jumbled pictures, and the last a Mariah Carey song highlighting synonymns and antonymns.

Graham, Carolyn. (1993) "Where the Magic Lies." **Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning. Vol 1, 1993**, pp. 26-29. A free-ranging interview with the guru of rhythmic English. She mentions several recent imaginative projects including assigning morning "voluntary rehearsals" (my phrase) of common phrases she calls "ritual English."

Fitzgerald, Lori A. (1994) "A Musical Approach for Teaching English Reading to Limited English Speakers." **ED371571**. Twenty-three native Spanish speaking first graders are put in a music "saturation" program, with daily English songs to sing, dancing to music, singing in Spanish, working in content areas with background instrumental music, and finally, reading lyrics as a literacy breakthrough.

Guglielmino, Lucy Madsen. (1986) "The Affective Edge: Using Songs and Music in ESL Instruction." **Adult Literacy and Basic Education**, v10 n1, 1986, pp. 19-26. States the case for using music in the classroom, highlighting learning styles.

Kanel, Kim R. (1996) "Teaching with Music: Song-based Tasks in the EFL Classroom." **Multimedia Language Teaching**, Sandra Fotos, ed. Tokyo: Logos International. Overview of diverse ways to use music in the ESL/EFL classroom.

Lems, Kristin. (1984) "Sing Out!" in the chapter "Preparing ESL Teachers/American Style," by Pearl Goodman, in **Initiatives in Communicative Language Teaching**, Savignon and Berns, eds.. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley. An outlined lesson plan teaching the song "Blowin in the Wind" to undergrad foreign students with related cultural activities.

Katchen, Johanna E. (1995) "Tell it with Music." **TESOL Journal: v4 n3 p. 28 Spring 1995**. A narrative lesson plan describing an assignment in which students listen to instrumental music and create an oral "imaginary music video" describing what is happening during the music. The oral presentations are videotaped and later critiqued, and

CD music jackets shown later, so students can follow up.

Katchen, Johanna E. "Mastering English Pronunciation through Literature." **ED304020.** Taiwanese undergraduate English majors are given cultural materials (songs, poems, prose readings, and tongue twisters) to improve pronunciation.

Magahay-Johnson, Wendy. (1984) "Music Hath Charms: Music and Student-Centered Stories in the ESL Classroom." **TESL Canada Journal**, v1 n1 Jan. 1984, pp. 81-82. Describes lesson plan adaptable to all ages in which students hear a piece of instrumental music and write stories about it from their imagination.

Medina, Suzanne L. (1990) "The Effects of Music upon Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition." **ED352834.** Second grade LEP students were put into four groups to track vocabulary acquisition, using musical version of the target story in one group, pictures in another, music and pictures in the third, and neither in the fourth. The group with both the music and pictures scored best.

Moi, Claudia Merrada. (1994) "Rock Poetry: The Literature our Students Listen to." **Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning.** Vol. 2, 1994, pp. 56-59. Moi reasons that this is the "literature" of most interest to our students and has many classroom uses. The strength of rock, she states, is the "words have liberated themselves from the duty of meaning something precise." It is the lack of right/wrong interpretations which allows rock to engage each comer individually, and makes an affirming classroom component. (This issue of the **Journal**, by the way, has four other excellent articles about uses of music, including one on Broadway musicals and another on country music.)

Moriya, Yasuyo. (1988) "English Speech Rhythm and its Teaching to Non-Native Speakers." **ED303033.** Displaying English stress patterns as musical notes helps Japanese speakers conceptualize and produce the delicate and unfamiliar stress patterns of English. The high level of music education in Japan makes these concepts readily accessible to language students. Moriya also has students whisper along with English songs.

Murphey, Tim. (1987) "English Through Music: Singing TPR, Walkin Labs, and Music Matter." **ED287292.** Two different teaching contexts highlight music, one a music-filled summer camp for EFL children, and other an adult ed class using "music appreciation" as its primary content area. "An interest in music and related movement is a strong motivator for language learning."

Murphey, Tim. (1992) "The Discourse of Pop Songs." **TESOL Quarterly: v26 n4 pp. 770-74 Win 1992.** Apparently 25% of the lyrics of the top 50 pop hits of 1987 were the words I, you, my, my, the, to, a, and, gonna, and love! The fact that the "I" in the song has no name, that no place or time is mentioned, and there are few gender referents make it accessible and easy for people to identify with pop songs. If

"involuntary rehearsal" activates the LAD (language acquisition device in the brain), music and song may play "an associative facilitating role in engaging and stimulating it."

Oxman, Wendy. (1975). "Music Language Arts Program: Spring 1975." **ED138684**. Lower level LEP high school students were placed in a special music-oriented pull-out program for one month. All lessons were designed around songs and music activities. While there were not statistically significant differences with the control group, it had a significant effect in "maintaining interest in school activities."

Puhl, Carol A. (1989) "Up from Under: English Training in the Mines. Report on 1988 Research Project Conducted at Gold Fields Training Services." **ED335864**. An eight week intensive English course for deprived S. African miners using accelerated learning techniques from the University of Stellenbosch including instrumental music for relaxation found that the group receiving the music had "more vitality," and was more "critical and thoughtful."

Richard-Amato, Patricia A. (1996) **Making it Happen**. White Plains, NY: Addison-Wesley/Longman. A section on using music in the classroom suggests the following potential lesson plans: 1.) using rewrites of common melodies on topics pertaining to the classroom, recent field trips, etc. 2.) children's songs for low-level students, including TPR activities; 3.) using pop songs (citing uses in Murphey 1992).

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Selected Bibliography of
Commercial ESL materials using music

The Carolyn Graham Turn of the Century Songbook: The sounds and structures of English set to the Music of Favorite American Songs. Carolyn Graham. New York: Regents, 1982. This slim book is full of photos and short feature articles about the "Gay Nineties," with some of its most famous songs (I've Been Workin on the Railroad, Auld Lang Syne, Clementine, etc.) rewritten with humorous original lyrics depicting everyday situations and emotions. With a table of contents sorting the songs by grammar points and short exercises to generate oral output based on some of the lyrical patterns at the back of the book, the bulk of the book is the songs and pictures. In a nutshell: jazz chants put to well-known music. Tape w/ fine jazz ensemble.

Singing USA: Springboard to Culture, by Wendy Hyman and Lori Diefenbacher, Heinle and Heinle: Boston, 1992. Well-loved traditional and contemporary American folk songs are the core of this 102 page book, organized by theme, including leadsheets, and accompanied by readings about the time the song came from, vocabulary practices, discussion questions about culture, and a second, ancillary song. The sister duo that wrote the book also sings the songs and wrote several of them. An excellent book for high level "transitional" students or American studies classes w/ LEP students.

Even if You Can't Carry a Tune...Grammar Through Popular Songs. Polly Perdinger and Joel Rosenfeld. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House, 1984. One of my all time favorite music books. The authors range over all different types of American music, focusing on grammar points in each song. The concise chapters include prelistening activities, a "song task" for each song, related vocabulary and structure exercises based on the songs, and discussion questions. Eclectic but still adaptable to a structured syllabus, the pop songs are well-chosen for the chosen tasks. There's a structure section in the back, and a tear sheet for students wanting to order their own cassette. Although pitched to beginning to intermediate students, I would select for intermediate or above.

Sharing a Song: Whole Language Activities Through Music. Bob Schneider. Menlo Park, Cal: Addison-Wesley, 1991. Tape of original songs for primary school ESL children (and others) includes an activity book, tape, teacher's guide, and video. Over and Over Again is apparently directed to pre-teens and teens, with more original songs by the same singer. The teacher's guide gives many good tips and TPR style activities to make the songs come alive.

Addison-Wesley Big Book Program, Level B, Addison-Wesley, Menlo Park, Cal., 1989.

If You Feel Like Singing. Alice Osman and Jean McConochie. New York: Longman and Co. 1979. Traditional American folk songs easy for learners to sing.

Fabulous song choices which guarantee participation, and tasteful if simple singing and arrangements. Black spirituals section has all white singers and singing styles. Music notation provided and piano parts. Some historical, cultural material, including photos, with no grammar. Book, cassette.

In Tune. Manuel C.R. dos Santos. Glenview: Scott, Foresman, 1983. Includes audio cassettes as part of complete 4 level series for adults, with four "audio books" of songs. Pleasant, soupy, "popular-style" composed songs after each six units, but songs have less redundancy than songs not composed for teaching purposes, and are too wordy for learners to sing along with. The (non-native?) singers make occasional pronunciation errors, and words are hard to pick out from background accompaniment. Has "disguised pattern practice." Chords and lyrics in student text. Student book, teacher's book, workbook, audio book text and audio book songs, cue book.

Jazz Chants: Rhythms of American English for Students of English as a Second Language. Carolyn Graham. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1978.Book, cassette. Appealing, occasionally exaggerated rhythms and rhymes of American English, presented in monologue or dialog form, with student parts modeled on tape. No music, but used similarly to using music.

Jazz Chants for Children: Rhythms of American English through Chants, Songs, and Poems. Carolyn Graham. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1979. Book, teacher's book, cassette. More of same, with children's focus.

Small Talk. Carolyn Graham. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1986. Book, cassettes designed for older children.

Speak Up! Sing Out! Graham Bushnell, Fiona Morel, Rachel Thomas. Skokie: National Textbook Company. 1984. Two student books, teacher's manuals, two cassettes. Twelve charming, upbeat, but wordy original songs sung by singers with British accents. Too fast to sing along with for most learners, but have singable choruses and instrumental break intended for inserting an original verse by students. Many lively accompanying exercises.

Tune in to English: Learning English through Familiar Melodies. Uwe Kind. New York: Regents, 1980. Book and two cassettes. Familiar international tunes put with new, appealing words makes singing easy. Funny and whimsical units create suspense and hilarity; tape includes breaking the song into parts to be repeated like a drill (or music lesson). This is the only tape which is intended to form the core of an ESL curriculum, and is part of what Kind calls the "Audio-Singual Method," field tested at Harvard and the New School for Social Research. Some complain that songs are too high in range for women students to sing.

American Folk Song Heritage. English Language Programs Division. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Washington, D.C.: United States Information

Agency. 1985. Twenty traditional American folk songs form focus of this book, which has extensive cultural and idiomatic explanation suitable for American studies or advanced students of ESL. Comes with cassette (not available at this time). No grammar or other practice.

Cloudsongs. Abbs and Jones. Longman Group, Ltd. 1977. Book not in my possession. Cassette tape has musically-appealing, pop-style original songs sung by British singers. Not enough repetition and vocal ranges too difficult for learners to sing along with songs. Several songs tell stories which could provoke good discussion.

ESL Express. Laurie Wellman and Donald R.H. Byrd. New York: MacMillan. 1974. Cassette, album. Teaches beginning structures via original rhythm and blues songs. I have the printed materials but no cassette tape.

Hard to Learn that English as a Second Language Blues: Songs for Learning English as a Second Language. Laurie Wellman and Donald R.H. Byrd. New York: MacMillan. 1974. Cassette, album. Teaches intermediate structures via original rhythm and blues songs.

Sing It! Mildred Grenough. New York: McGraw-Hill. 1994. Six level series uses songs as the foundation for presentation of all language skills. Ambitious, thoughtful choices, and good related cultural readings. The singers that made the songs famous are highlighted and featured, but their versions of the songs are not in the recordings. This creates an awkward problem and could be considered misrepresentation. Six books with cassettes, sheet music for all songs included.

Word by Word: Songbook/Song Album/Picture Dictionary. Peter Bliss, Steven J. Molinsky and Bill Bliss. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentic Hall Regents. 1995. The world-renowned authors of Side by Side etc. have used original songs by Peter Bliss as vocabulary-learning tools on a variety of topics. The songbook includes color pictures with lyrics and sheet music on topics of interest. Includes cassette/CD recordings of the songs. I found the songs strained and not especially appealing, although the concept of effortless vocabulary learning through music is a great one, and typical of the creativity of Molinsky and Bliss.

Some Good Songs for Classroom Use
tested by presenter or other known teacher

Beginning level:

Happy Birthday to You, If You're Happy and you Know it, Hello (Beatles), Hello (Ella Jenkins), Everybody Loves Saturday Night, Roll Over, Head Shoulders Knees and Toes, 500 Miles, Where Have all the Flowers Gone?, Michael, This Little Light of Mine, Kumbaya, Make New Friends, The More We Get Together, The Lion Sleeps Tonight, In My Family's House....

Intermediate level:

Blowin' in the Wind, This Land is Your Land, Wild World, Yesterday, Longer Than, Under the Boardwalk, You Gotta Be, Little Boxes, Oh What a Beautiful Morning, Don't Worry Be Happy, Move on Bravely Ahead, You can Get it if you Really Want, Sharing, He Makes that Baby Laugh, Octopus' Garden, Take me Out to the Ball Game, Que Sera, Hello (Lionel Ritchie), I've Been Workin on the Railroad, In my Life, When I'm 64, Turn

Advanced level:

Operator, Country Roads, Ode to Billie Jo, Gangsta's Paradise, Stairway to Heaven, Cat's in the Cradle, Everything I Own, El Condor Pasa, Born in the USA, The Boxer, Lyin' Eyes, America the Beautiful, If, Longer Than, I Did it My Way...

Others mentioned in workshop:

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